



Myers JDC
Brookdale

Major Preventive Welfare Programs and Best Practices International Review

Vered Porzycki Hilla Dolev Michael Hartal

Editor: Ronit Cohen Ben-Nun
English translation (Abstract): Ami Asher
Graphic design: Efrat Speaker

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Myers JDC Brookdale Institute

P.O.B. 3886, Jerusalem 9103702, Israel

Tel: 02-6557400

brookdale.jdc.org.il/en | brook@jdc.org

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Abstract

Background

In recent years, countries worldwide have been emphasizing the development of preventive welfare services. This trend reflects the shift from an approach of providing treatment services to at-risk and disadvantaged populations to an approach seeking to prevent, reduce or delay welfare problems. According to this approach, decision-makers and service providers should initiate preventive welfare programs in order to promote service users' well-being and quality of life, reduce existing problems and prevent the emergence of new ones, and strengthen at-risk populations.

Recently, the Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs initiated a process of shaping a *preventive welfare* policy. To do so, the Ministry requested an international review from the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute.

Objectives

The objectives of this review included: (1) Examine which evidence-based preventive care programs are currently active in different countries around the world for target populations, as defined by the Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs: young families, people with disability, older people, and children and youth at-risk, including children in residential care; (2) Identify best practices in providing preventive care services; and (3) Examine how these programs are measured and evaluated.

Method

The review is based on three sources of information: (1) Academic literature; (2) Legislation in various countries; and (3) Open-access documents and manuals of various organizations that examine the effectiveness of preventive welfare programs.

Findings

The findings of this review are related to three aspects: theory, policy, and practice. *Regarding theory*, by definition, prevention policy has two main goals: (1) Promoting individual and family well-being while preventing, reducing, or delaying welfare problems, and in turn, seeking to influence broader population groups and communities in order to prevent social exclusion and inequality; (2) Reducing demand for welfare services, thereby decreasing

the overload on existing services and improving them. *Regarding policy*, preventive welfare services are anchored in welfare laws in various countries. These laws dedicate specific sections to prevention, and emphasize the importance of providing evidence-based programs. *Practically*, preventive care services involve unique practices related to both planning, such as identifying and mapping risk factors that potentially affecting individuals' well-being, and implementation, such as emphasizing measurement and evaluation for the purpose of operating evidence-based programs.